

VISIT...

LANZAROTE  
*Caliente*.COM

**MARVEL**  
**COMICS**  
© 1992 MARVEL ENT. GROUP, INC.

\$1.75 US

\$2.15 CAN

52

JULY

UK £1.20

APPROVED  
BY THE  
COMICS  
CODE  
AUTHORITY

**PROF X<sup>TM</sup>**  
**VERSUS**  
**THE**

**X-MEN<sup>TM</sup>**



**30TH**  
**ANNIVERSARY**  
1962 - 1992



**THE AMAZING**  
**SPIDER-MAN**

IF THIS DOESN'T  
INCREASE SALES,  
NOTHING WILL!

THE POWERFUL CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE SHAPE-CHANGING MEGGAN, THE INTANGIBLE SHADOWCAT, THE TELEPORTING NIGHTCRAWLER, THE MYSTERIOUS PHOENIX, THE EVER-UNPREDICTABLE WIDGET AND LOCKHEED THE DRAGON FORGED IN THE FIRES OF THEIR TRAGIC PASTS, THEY HAVE Banded TOGETHER TO FIGHT A MODERN DAY CRUSADE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL! STAN LEE PRESENTS...

EXCALIBUR!

# ALL YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PHOENIX ...BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

ALAN  
DAVIS  
WRITER

WILL  
SIMPSON  
BREAKDOWNS

JIMMY PALMIOTI/  
& DAVE HOOVER  
FINISHES

MICHAEL  
HEIGLER  
LETTERER

KELLY  
CORVESE  
COLORIST

TERRY  
KAVANAGH  
EDITOR

TOM  
DEBALCO  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

EXCALIBUR CREATED BY CHRIS CLAREMONT AND ALAN DAVIS

IN A TROUBLED WORLD,  
MOMENTS OF PEACE ARE  
TO BE TREASURED.

MOMENTS WHEN THE SLOW,  
HYPNOTIC TICK OF A DISTANT  
CLOCK IS LOST IN SIMPLE  
PLEASURES.

THE GENTLE TONES  
OF ELGAR'S ENIGMA  
VARIATIONS.

THE FIERY HISS  
AND SPIT OF LOGS  
THAT BLAZE IN AN  
OPEN HEARTH.

THE AROMATIC  
WARMTH OF A  
FINE NAPOLEON  
BRANDY.

AND A BOOK  
OF SELECTED  
POETRY.

SIMPLE  
PLEASURES...

EXCALIBUR™ Vol. 1, No. 52, July, 1992. (ISSN 1045-1368) Published by MARVEL COMICS, Terry Stewart, President, Stan Lee, Publisher Michael Hobson, Group Vice President, Publishing Office of Publication: 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT NEW YORK, N.Y. AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. Published monthly. Copyright © 1992 Marvel Entertainment Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Price \$1.75 per copy in the U.S. and \$2.15 in Canada. Subscription rate for 12 issues: U.S. \$21.00; foreign \$23.00; and Canadian subscribers must add \$6.00 for postage and GST. GST #R123032852. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. This periodical may not be sold except by authorized dealers and is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be sold or distributed with any part of its cover or markings removed, nor in a mutilated condition. EXCALIBUR (including all prominent characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likeness thereof) is a trademark of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO EXCALIBUR, c/o MARVEL COMICS, 5TH FLOOR, 387 PARK AVENUE SOUTH, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10016. Printed in Canada.

...FOR A COMPLEX MAN, PROFESSOR CHARLES XAVIER -- THE MOST POWERFUL TELEPATH ON EARTH.

HE SAVORS THIS MOMENT OF PSYCHIC SILENCE -- FAR FROM THE BABBLE OF THOUGHTS THAT SPILL FROM WEAK MINDS --

--SEEKING TO LOSE HIMSELF IN THE PRIMITIVE COMMUNICATION OF PRINTED WORDS...

...AND THE CRYPTIC WISDOM THAT HANGS IN THE WHITE SPACES.

The words are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep.

The room isn't silent. It's full of the soft hum of the computer system, the distant hum of the city.

MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP.

MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP...

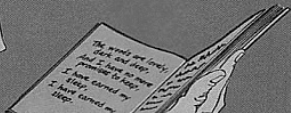
PEP  
PEP

YES...?

JUST CHECKING IN, SIR. THE CRISIS BOARD IS STILL CLEAR.

WE CAN ALL ENJOY OUR BREAK.

YES... THANK YOU, SCOTT.



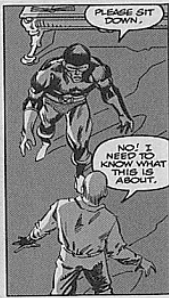
SCOTT!

YES, SIR?

SCOTT -- NOW DID YOU GET HERE SO QUICKLY?

I WAS PASSING.

I DID NOT HEAR YOU COME IN.











THE IMAGERY I ENCOUNTERED WAS CONFUSED, BUT PRIMARILY BASED ON THE PERIOD RACHEL SPENT WITH THE X-MEN.

RACHEL'S MEMORIES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FRAGMENTED, PROFESSOR. SHE BELIEVED THE PHOENIX FORCE WAS RESPONSIBLE, SO SHE MADE IT DORMANT.

OVER A PERIOD OF WEEKS HER MEMORY BEGAN TO HEAL.

AND SHE MADE A NUMBER OF INSIGHTS INTO HER PAST LIFE--OUR FUTURE.

THE FUTURE OF AN ALTERNATE EARTH, KURT.

RACHEL CLAIMED I WAS HER MOTHER. THAT SCOTT WAS HER FATHER.

IN HER "TIME" THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT IS EN-SLAVED BY SENTINELS. MUTANTS ARE EXTERMINATED OR HELD IN BRUTAL CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

IF THAT GRIM, HOPELESS FUTURE EXISTS, NOTHING WE CAN DO WILL ALTER IT. I CAN'T BELIEVE WE HAVE NO CONTROL OVER OUR DESTINY.

I UNDERSTAND, JEAN. SO DID RACHEL. BUT IT WAS MORE THAN A PHILOSOPHICAL DILEMMA TO HER-- SHE LIVED THROUGH IT.

SHE HOPED TO REMEMBER THE CAUSE OF HER FUTURE-- TO STOP IT FROM HAPPENING AGAIN.

BUT HER MEMORY WAS DESTROYED WHEN SHE REACTIVATED THE PHOENIX FORCE TO FIGHT NECROM. SHE DEFEATED HIM...

...BUT RETURNED IN HER CURRENT CONDITION.

DO NOT BLAME YOURSELF, KURT.

WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DOES THE ORIGINAL PHOENIX COSTUME HAVE, PROFESSOR?

IT MAY BE THE KEY TO HER CONDITION KATHERINE.

WHILE I WAS MINDLINKED TO RACHEL, I WAS "DETAINED" IN AN ILLUSION OF TOTAL SERENITY. EVERY DETAIL, EVERY SENSATION WAS CORRECT...

IF MY SUBCONSCIOUS CHOICE OF READINGS HAD NOT RAISED A SENSE OF DOUBT, I WOULD BE THERE STILL.

A SMALL PERCENTAGE OF THE POWER IT TOOK TO MAINTAIN SUCH A SOPHISTICATED ILLUSION COULD HAVE DESTROYED ME.



YET, NO AGGRESSIVE MOVE WAS MADE UNTIL I TRIED TO PROBE BEYOND THE AREA I WAS CONFINED IN.

I BELIEVE I WAS IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH THE PHOENIX FORCE.

WHAT ABOUT RACHEL?

I DO NOT KNOW, BUT IT IS TIME TO FIND OUT.



NOT NOW, PROFESSOR. YOU SHOULD REST AND HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT.

I HAVE DONE NOTHING BUT REST FOR THE LAST TEN HOURS. KATHERINE, AND PHYSICAL HUNGER WILL SHARPEN MY CONCENTRATION.

ANYWAY, I DO NOT PROPOSE TO MAKE ANOTHER PERSONAL APPROACH. THE PHOENIX FORCE HAS CAUSE TO SEE ME AS A THREAT.



IT MAY BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO FRIENDS.

I WILL ANCHOR YOU ALL WITH A PSYCHIC LIFELINE SO I CAN PULL YOU OUT AT THE FIRST SIGN OF DANGER.



STOP MUCKING ABOUT, ALISTAIR. YOU'D THINK YOU'VE NEVER BEEN PSYCHONICALLY INDUCED ATMOSPHERIC IONIZATION BEFORE.

DON'T BE SILLY, BRIAN. IT'S PROFESSOR XAVIER'S MINDLINK.

JEAN, BOTH RACHEL AND THE PHOENIX HAVE DISPLAYED A STRONG AFFINITY WITH YOU. USE IT!

YOU MUST SUPPRESS ANY NEGATIVE FEELINGS.

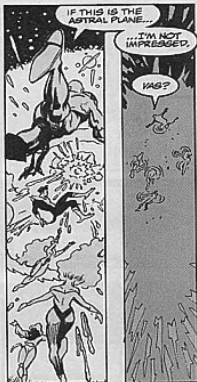
I'M READY, SIR.



I KNEW I'D HAVE TO FACE UP TO THIS SOONER OR LATER.

SO LET'S GO!

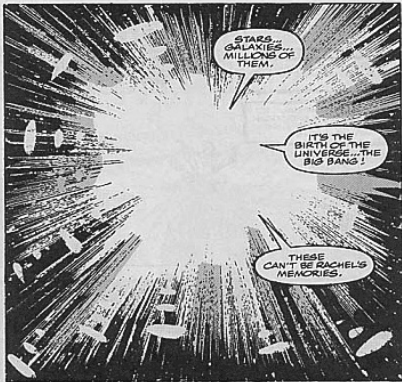




IF THIS IS THE  
ASTRAL PLANE...

...I'M NOT  
IMPRESSED.

HAS?



STARS...  
GALAXIES...  
MILLIONS OF  
THEM.

IT'S THE  
BIRTH OF THE  
UNIVERSE...THE  
BIG BANG!

THESE  
CAN'T BE RACHEL'S  
MEMORIES.



NO, THEY  
BELONG TO  
THE  
PHOENIX  
FORCE.

WHY ARE  
YOU  
SHOWING  
US THIS?



"I WANT YOU  
TO UNDERSTAND.  
IT IS IMPORTANT  
THAT YOU  
UNDERSTAND.



"THIS IS  
HOW I CAME  
INTO BEING.

"ALONE.

"WITHOUT FEELING,  
WITHOUT EMOTION,  
WITHOUT DESIRE.

"I EXISTED BUT  
WAS OBVIOUS TO  
EXISTENCE. I  
SIMPLY WAS.



"UNTIL A MIND  
TOUCHED ME.

"THE CONTACT  
FOCUSSED MY  
AWARENESS.  
I Woke TO  
REALITY.

"CURIOSITY  
BLOSSOMED  
WITHIN ME.

"THE SIREN CALL OF  
ANOTHER INTELLIGENCE  
DREW ME TO THE  
EARTH.



"THERE I JOINED WITH FERON, HE WHO HAD CALLED ME TO CONSCIOUSNESS.

"IN JOYOUS COMMUNION I WAS SHAPED BY HIS DREAM.

"I OPENED MYSELF TO SHARE IN A SPECTRUM OF SENSATION I HAD NEVER KNOWN.



"BUT MY FIRST LESSON WAS PAIN...

"...AS NECROM VIOLATED MY ESSENCE.



"I FLED IN AGONIZED RAGE.



"IN TIME, THE FOG OF PAIN SUBSIDED AND I ENDEAVORED TO ACHIEVE MY NATURAL STATE.

"BUT I COULD NOT GO BACK. I WAS FOREVER CHANGED.

"LOST AND ALONE, I RETURNED TO EARTH.



"IT TOO HAD CHANGED. MAN HAD EVOLVED TO TAKE HIS FIRST FALTERING STEPS TO THE HEAVENS.

"I SOUGHT FERON...BUT FOUND ANOTHER.



"THERE, PILOTING A DAMAGED SPACE SHUTTLE, PREPARED TO SACRIFICE HER LIFE FOR HER FRIENDS--

"--WHOM SHE HAD LOCKED IN THE SAFETY OF A SHIELDED CARGO BAY--



"--WAS JEAN GREY.

"I WATCHED--AS COSMIC RADIATION RAYAGED HER FRAIL MORTAL FORM--

"--UNABLE TO COMPREHEND THE EMOTIONS THAT DROVE HER TO ENDURE SUCH AGONY FOR OTHERS.



"BUT HER CAUSE WAS LOST, DEATH WAS INEVITABLE...



"...UNLESS I INTERVENED.

"I DID NOT ACT WITH NOBLE PURPOSE.

"LIKE A JEALOUS CHILD, I WANTED WHAT I DID NOT POSSESS.



"A DEAL WAS STRUCK. A DEVIL'S BARGAIN.

"WITH BORROWED LIFEFORCE, I REPLICATED THE MIND AND FORM OF JEAN GREY."



"...THEN SEALED HER SHATTERED FRAME INSIDE A HEALING COCOON.



"SO THE PHOENIX ROSE AS THE TRIUMPHANT SAVIOR OF ALL ABOARD THE SHUTTLE.

"WHILE JEAN GREY LAY IN A COCOON..."



"...BENEATH THE DARK WATERS OF JAMAICA BAY.

"I WAS INTOXICATED WITH THE RICH EXPERIENCE OF MY NEW LIFE.

"I LEARNED OF FRIENDSHIP OF CAVARADERIE..."

"...AND LOVE.

"ITS HEADY PASSION  
OVERWHELMED ME.  
I DENIED MY OWN  
CONSCIOUSNESS,  
BURIED IT BENEATH  
A LIE.

"I WAS  
JEAN GREY.

"BUT I STILL  
POSSESSED  
COSMIC POWER.

"AND POWER  
CORRUPTS.

"IT THRIVES  
ON EASY  
VICTORIES.

"AND THOUGH  
FRIENDS OFFERED  
SAGE COUNSEL  
AND UNCONDI-  
TIONAL LOVE --

"--AND CONCERNED  
PARENTS WRAPPED  
ME IN TENDER  
CARE...

"...DARK  
SEEDS HAD  
BEEN SOWN.

"I WAS SEDUCED  
BY PRIMAL LUST...

"...AND  
HUNGER.

"INSATIABLE  
HUNGER.

"I WAS OUT OF  
CONTROL. NOTHING  
COULD OPPOSE ME.

"OR SO I THOUGHT,  
UNTIL I WAS CON-  
FRONTED WITH THE  
INCOMITABLE WILL  
AND TERRIFYING  
SKILL OF PROFESSOR  
CHARLES XAVIER.

"HE BYPASSED  
MY PSYCHIC  
DEFENSES...

"LAD PSIONIC  
CIRCUIT BREAK-  
ERS TO DISRUPT  
MY POWER...

"...THEN HE REINFORCED  
THE PART OF ME THAT  
WAS JEAN GREY.

"HE MADE ME SEE  
WHAT I WAS--WHAT  
I HAD BECOME.

"IN THAT INSTANT I  
GLIMPSED THE SOUL  
OF JEAN GREY...

"...AND I REJECTED THE  
POWER OF THE PHOENIX.

"OTHERS WERE NOT  
PREPARED TO FORGIVE  
MY CRIMES. THE GHIAI  
DEMANDED JUSTICE."

"THE X-MEN STOOD BESIDE  
ME IN A DUEL OF HONOR.  
THEY WERE READY TO DIE  
FOR ME... FOR JEAN GREY."

"I COULD NOT  
LET THAT  
HAPPEN."

"I MADE THE X-MEN  
FEAR ME."

"I WANTED THEM  
TO HATE ME."

"TO KILL ME."

"HOW LITTLE I  
UNDERSTOOD OF THE HUMAN  
SOUL."

"AS I LOOKED AT  
THE MAN I HAD  
GROWN TO LOVE,  
I HESITATED."

"I WOULD  
MISS HIM."

"ONLY MY LOVE FOR  
HIM GAVE ME THE  
STRENGTH TO TRIGGER  
THE ALIEN CANNON..."

"...THAT VAPORIZED  
THE MORTAL SHELL  
I HAD REPLICATED."

"I EMBRACED MY GUILT. I HAD  
STOLEN A LIFE. LIVED WITH LIES  
AND DECEIT, CAUSING PAIN,  
DEATH AND DESTRUCTION."

"IT HAD  
TO END."

"MY ESSENCE  
SURVIVED, HIDDEN  
IN THE SMOLDERING  
CRATER. I  
WATCHED SCOTT  
SUMMERS GRIEVE."

"NOT FOR ME--  
BUT FOR THE  
WOMAN HE  
THOUGHT I  
WAS."

"LONG  
AFTER  
SCOTT  
LEFT..."

"...I REFLECTED  
ON MY FOLLY."

"I COULD CONCEIVE  
OF NO WAY TO UNDO  
THE EVIL I HAD  
DONE..."

"...SAVE RETURN  
TO JEAN GREY THE  
LIFE FORCE I HAD  
STOLEN."

"AS I DESCENDED TOWARD  
THE EARTH I GENSED JEAN,  
NOT IN HER COCCOON, BUT  
FLOATING HIGH OVER NEW  
YORK."

"I DREW CLOSER  
AND DISCOVERED  
THE ASTRAL FORM  
WAS ANOTHER..."

"...WHOSE PSYCHIC  
RESONANCE PRE-  
CISELY DUPLICATED  
THAT OF JEAN  
GREY."

"...BUT ON THE  
SURFACE I  
THOUGHT I SAW  
A NAME, RACHEL  
SUMMERS."

"DAUGHTER OF  
SCOTT SUMMERS  
AND HIS WIFE--  
JEAN GREY."

"PUZZLED BY  
THIS ANOMALY,  
I PURSUED THE  
MEMORIES."

"CURIOUS, I  
EXTENDED A  
PSYCHIC PROBE.  
THE MIND WAS  
LOCKED DEEP  
IN MEDITATION..."

"HAPPY MEMORIES OF A  
LOVING FAMILY. THE SAME  
FAMILY I HAD KNOWN--  
THE X-MEN."

"RACHEL'S WORLD  
GREW SUDDENLY  
SAD AND DARK."

"THE GOVERNMENT  
USED THE DISASTER  
TO OUTLAW MUTANT-  
KIND."

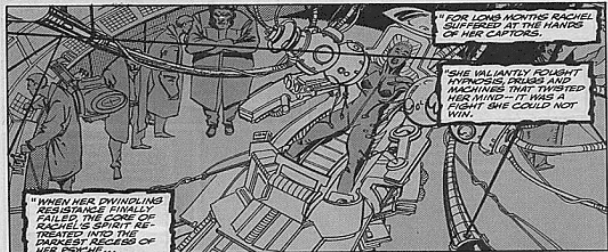
"BUT THESE  
X-MEN HAD  
NEVER EN-  
COUNTERED  
PHOENIX."

"HER MOTHER WAS  
KILLED WHEN  
MASTERMIND  
DETONATED A  
NUCLEAR DEVICE  
IN PITTSBURGH."

"KURT WAGNER, HIS  
WIFE AMANDA SEFTON  
AND ILLYANA RAS-  
PUTIN WERE THE FIRST  
TO BE SLAUGHTERED..."

"...WHEN THE MILITARY  
LAUNCHED A DEVASTAT-  
ING ATTACK ON XAVIER'S  
MANSION."







"WITHOUT REMORSE, RACHEL TRACKED FRIEND AND FOE ALIKE."



"HER MIND LOCKED TO THEIRS, UNDERSTANDING IN AN INSTANT EVERY THOUGHT, MEMORY AND DESIRE."



"AND WHEN THE TARGET WAS TRAPPED AND KILLED..."



"...THAT TINY PART OF RACHEL--FAR BENEATH CONSCIOUS THOUGHT--MAINTAINED THE LINK."

"USING EACH NEW DEATH TO FUEL SHAME, AND GRIEF, AND ANGER."



"ANAB SAW REBELLION IN RACHEL'S STEADY GAZE AND RESPONDED WITH CHARACTERISTIC CRUELTY."

"RACHEL WELCOMED THE PAIN..."



"...IT GAVE FOCUS TO A GROWING FURY THAT SHATTERED THE PSYCHIC RESTRAINTS OF HER CONDITIONING."

"THOUGH RACHEL'S MIND WAS FREE... SHE KNEW SHE COULD NOT ESCAPE."

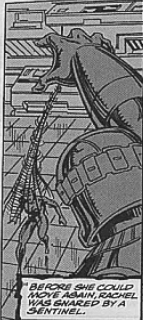


"SO SHE USED THAT INSTANT OF FREEDOM TO AVENGE ALL THE SOULS..."



"...AHAB HAD FORCED HER TO BETRAY."

FRZZACK



"BEFORE SHE COULD MOVE AGAIN, RACHEL WAS SNARED BY A SENTINEL."



"SHE DID NOT WASTE TIME STRUGGLING, BUT SMILED WITH SAVAGE JOY AS SHE LOOKED DOWN AT AHAB'S MUTILATED BODY."

"IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, SHE DREW STRENGTH FROM THAT SMALL VICTORY..."

"...AND RESISTED EVERY ATTEMPT TO REPROGRAM HER."



"SO SHE WAS SENT TO A CONTAINMENT CAMP TO AWAIT GENETIC EXPERIMENTATION."

"EVEN IN THESE DESPERATE CONDITIONS, HOPE FLOURISHED."

"RACHEL WAS REUNITED WITH THE SURVIVING X-MEN..."

"...AND THEY DEvised A PLAN TO SAVE MUTANTKIND."



"RACHEL WAS CRUCIAL TO THE PLAN--NOT FOR THE TELEPATHY AND TELEKINESIS SHE HAD INHERITED FROM HER MOTHER--"



"THE PLAN WAS DARING--SEEKING TO CHANGE A SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN THE PAST TO PREVENT THEIR PRESENT FROM OCCURRING."



"THE EVENT HAD TAKEN PLACE PRIOR TO RACHEL'S BIRTH, SO SHE HAD NO BODY TO POSSESS IN THAT ERA."

"WHEREAS KATE PROVE HAD BEEN A TEENAGER..."

"--AND, SINCE IT IS EASIER FOR AN ADULT MIND TO DIS-PLACE THAT OF A CHILD, RACHEL PROJECTED KATE'S CONSCIOUSNESS INTO THE PAST."

"--BUT HER OWN MUTANT ABILITY TO PROTECT HER ASTRAL SELF THROUGH TIME."



"THE PLAN DID NOT WORK."

"HISTORY HAD BEEN ALTERED, BUT WHEN KATE RETURNED TO THE FUTURE, IT WAS UNCHANGED."

"RACHEL PROTECTED HERSELF INTO THE PAST TO INVESTIGATE WHY THEY HAD FAILED."

"THERE, SHE DISCOVERED SHE HAD TRAVELED CROSS-TIME INTO ANOTHER EARTH'S PAST--"

"--AND SO PREPARED TO RETURN TO THE FUTURE."

"RACHEL HAD ENDURED INHUMAN SUFFERING. SHE HAD BEEN STRIPPED OF HER HUMANITY--HER VERY SOUL."

"YET, SHE FOUGHT AND WON IT BACK."

"I COULD NOT BEAR TO LOSE HER TO THE FUTURE."

"WHICH IS WHY I HAD DISCOVERED HER ASTRAL SELF MEDITATING HIGH ABOVE NEW YORK."

"THERE WAS SO MUCH I COULD LEARN FROM HER."

"AS I FELT HER PSYCHE BEGIN TO SLIP INTO THE TIMESTREAM, I SENT A PORTION OF MY ESSENCE TO RESTORE THE STOLEN LIFE FORCE TO JEAN GREY..."

"...AND FOLLOWED RACHEL INTO THE FUTURE."



"RACHEL WAS UNCONSCIOUS FROM THE STRAIN OF OUR JOURNEY WHEN I EMERGED FROM HER MIND AND REVEALED MYSELF TO KATE PRYDE."

"IN THAT TIRED OLD FACE, I SAW THE CHILD I HAD KNOWN."

"SHE LISTENED IN SILENCE AS I INTRODUCED MYSELF AND TOLD MY STORY."

"I EXPECTED SHOCK OR FEAR, BUT KATE SHOWED NEITHER."



"SHE SPOKE WITH QUIET STRENGTH IN A VOICE TINGED WITH SADNESS."

"SHE HAD NOTHING LEFT TO LIVE FOR. ALL HER FRIENDS AND FAMILY WERE DEAD."

"BUT RACHEL WAS YOUNG. HER SHORT LIFE HAD BEEN A LIVING NIGHTMARE."



"KATE ASKED THAT I GIVE RACHEL A CHANCE FOR A FRESH START."

"I AGREED."

"THE FOLLOWING DAY  
KATE AND RACHEL BROKE  
INTO THE CYBERBOTIC  
COMPLEX..."

"...TO DESTROY  
PROTECT NIMROD."

"NIMROD WAS TO BE A  
NEW SUPER-SENTINEL--"

"--SECURITY WAS  
VIRTUALLY IMPEN-  
ETRABLE. ONCE IN,  
THERE WAS NO  
WAY OUT. IT WAS A  
SUICIDE MISSION."

"KATE WAS READY TO  
DIE TO GIVE RACHEL A  
CLEAN GETAWAY-- AND  
SINCE THE COMPLEX  
REACTOR WOULD VA-  
PORIZE EVERYTHING  
WITHIN A SQUARE  
MILE WHEN IT EX-  
PLODED..."

"...NO ONE  
WOULD EX-  
PECT RACHEL  
TO SURVIVE."

"...AND I SUPERCHARGED  
RACHEL'S ROVER TO THROW  
HER BACK IN TIME--  
PHYSICALLY."

"RACHEL WAS  
UNAWARE THAT  
SHE HOSTED MY  
ESSENCE. KATE  
SAID IT SHOULD  
BE SO."

"SHE ALSO ASKED  
THAT I SUPPRESS  
RACHEL'S MEMORY--  
TO STOP THE GHOSTS  
OF THE PAST HAUN-  
TING HER FUTURE."

"BEFORE DETONATING  
THE DEVICE, KATE  
SAID THE CODE WORDS  
DARK PHOENIX..."

"IT WAS  
NOT EASY--  
RACHEL'S  
MIND WAS  
STRONG.  
SOME-  
TIMES SHE  
REMEM-  
BERED."

"I HAD  
NOT MEANT  
TO CAUSE  
CONFUSION.  
I SOUGHT  
ONLY TO DO  
AS KATE  
HAD ASKED."

JUST  
FOLLOWING  
ORDERS, EN?  
I'VE HEARD  
THAT  
BEFORE.

IT EXPLAINS  
RACHEL'S JUMBLED  
AND INCONSISTENT  
MEMORY--

--BUT WHATS  
HAPPENED TO HER--  
I MEAN, WHERE IS  
RACHEL?





LESS THAN A HUNDRED MILES TO THE NORTH OF BRADDOCK MANOR LIES SKUFFINGTON WALLOR...

...ONE OF THE INNUMERABLE PICTURESQUE HAMLETS THAT DOT THE BRITISH LANDSCAPE.

COOEE!  
ANYBODY AT HOME?

NOBODY'S  
IN THAT ONE  
EITHER.

THIS ONE'S  
EMPTY, TOO.  
BREAKFAST  
HALF-EATEN, TELLY  
ON-- BLOOMIN'  
CREEPY, IT IS.

THERE'S GOT  
TO BE A  
LOGICAL EX-  
PLANATION.

A WHOLE  
VILLAGE DON'T  
ALL GET UP AN' RUN  
OFF IN THE MIDDLE  
OF BREAKFAST WITH-  
OUT GOOD REASON.

I DUNNO,  
I THINK THERE'S  
SOMETHIN' FUNNY  
GOIN' ON.

NAW! NOTHIN'  
WEIRD EVER HAPPENS  
'ROUND HERE.

I MEAN, WHO'S  
GONNA KIDNAP A  
VILLAGE FULL OF  
OLD FOLK?

NEXT ISSUE!  
**THE LITTER**--  
FEATURING THE AMAZING  
SPIDER-MAN!



# SWORD STROKES

% MARVEL COMICS GROUP  
387 Park Avenue South  
New York, New York 10016

TERRY KAVANAGH  
EDITOR  
MARK POWERS  
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Let me describe to you my feelings on EXCALIBUR #42-48: Amazing! Incredible! Uncanny! Fantastic! And those are only a few! I have not written a letter to you guys since I was in my early teens. (God! That was a long time ago!) But, I've gotten so excited about what's happening in EXCALIBUR, I just had to tell you!

Alan Davis is back — this man belongs writing and drawing this book. He has breathed such life back into these characters that they seemed pale before. And those loose ends being tied — Kylon is Colin — oh gosh! Oh gosh! Oh wow! All the way from issue #1! Stagger the mind! Anyway, thanks for resurrecting my favorite book. Make Mine Marvel!

Richard L. Pollard  
Rt. 3 Box 83-C  
Farmville, VA 23901

Yep, we've been tying up loose ends like crazy, Rich — but the next letter writer found one more!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Like so many others, I have been a fan of EXCALIBUR since the very beginning. While re-reading my back issues I came across an old mystery that has yet to be solved. At the very end of the Captain Britain paperback, we see Capt. UK holding the infamous Opal Luna Saturnyne in what appears to be handcuffs, and burning her flag. But in issue #3, Opal seems to be back in power as she is met by a colander-helmeted, sci-fi fanatic. Then in issue #5, we see Opal, colander in hand, meeting her "double," Courtney Ross. Courtney gets "zapped," and ever since then, she is pictured wearing an earring with Opal's insignia. Well, what exactly happened?

Later, using Nigel as a liaison, Courtney employs the talent of the seemingly all-powerful Jamie Braddock, and defeats Vixen. I hope we will get to see the confrontation between Jamie and Excalibur soon, because Jamie should not be running around loose! I know you have other plots on your mind right now, but please don't leave this one hanging for too much longer.

Finally, where is the Crazy Gang? If they are still on Earth, what do you think about having Gatecrasher hire them? Until King Arthur complains about copyright infringement, Make Mine EXCALIBUR!

Jim Solomita  
231 River rd.  
S. Deerfield, MA 01373

Okay, okay, so we haven't gotten around to wrapping up the Saturnyne storyline, yet! (You did an excellent job of summing it up, Jim!) We promise that within the next 10 or 12 issues, we will get to this mystery — just give us a chance! But Jamie Braddock will be returning to haunt our heroes very soon.

And watch for the return of the Crazy Gang, who are still on Earth, with issue #54!

Dear X-Folks,

First of all, I would like to thank Alan Davis for returning to EXCALIBUR. I always knew Alan was a great artist, but he is also a superb writer. I was so excited after reading issue #42, I just knew Alan was going to take EXCALIBUR to new heights. Six issues later, EXCALIBUR has already surpassed all of my expectations! Issue #48 was appropriately named "Toward the Future!"

Already we have two new team members which I'm falling in love with more and more every issue! Kylon is most funny and wonderful. Thank you for not making Kylon a Wolverine/Sabertooth wanna-be. There are enough tough guys running around the Marvel Universe! As for Certe, I know so little about her, yet I find myself loving her already!

Bryan Alexander  
(Address withheld upon request)

Nearly all our readers feel the same way you do about our two new team members, Bryan! And for all those who asked, it's "sur-ezz!"

Dear Sword Strokes,

First, let me add my name to the legions of fans cheering Alan Davis' return. Before issue #42, EXCALIBUR had drifted down my short list of "must buy" comics, till it almost fell off the bottom (onto the wait-till-the-utility-bills-are-paid list). Since his return, it's shot right to the top again. Few other writers/artists seem able to portray the simple, humorous side of everyday life. His characters don't scramble from one crisis to another without pause for breath; nor do they spend every spare second brooding darkly over past, present and future horrors. They simply live, like people do. 'Tis a rare talent, indeed...

Second, I like this Kylon fellow! In a few short issues (#46-48), you've given him a depth of character that amazes me. I just adored how he was so reluctant to talk about his relatively "insignificant" power, but couldn't resist a chance to show off when everyone wanted a demo! (A secret pride can be a small but sweet joy...) Up till now, Kitty and Lockheed were my neck-and-neck favorites, but I do believe Kylon had taken the lead. More, more, MORE!

Finally, now that Roma has removed Captain Britain's "blunder jinx," dare I hope that he'll be just a bit more level-headed and mature in the future? (The way he'd been behaving in issues past, I was beginning to wonder if you were preparing to do something drastic like boot him off the team for a year or two, on one of those clichéd "soul-searching quests.") I'd like to take the way he complimented Kylon towards the end of issue #48 as a hopeful sign...

Please keep up the superlative work!

Kim Sanders  
94-249 Palwa St.  
Waipahua, HI 96737

Thanks for a thoughtful letter, Kim! We think you'll like what's in store!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Well, here it is! Your first letter from a charter member of the Nightcrawler fan club. Although I buy every issue of EXCALIBUR, I don't often read the letter page. In issue #48 however, fate drew me to two letters in particular — one from another smitten female fan eager to start a fan club, and one young man who included a write-up on Kurt Wagner that I won't even attempt to top. I was delighted to see that I'm not the only one who appreciates this down-to-Earth hero trapped in an un-Earthly body.

You see, at one time I didn't know that comics existed. I figured they'd died out sometime in the fifties. Imagine my surprise when I got to college and discovered that half my classmates were devoted fans! There was even one guy who liked to draw them. He introduced me to several comics and, surprise, I really liked them — especially EXCALIBUR. Kurt and Kitty instantly became my favorites and I've read every magic tale since. Nightcrawler is the second love of my life, and to top it off, he's also my favorite color!

And my first love? Well, that guy who introduced me to comics managed to steal my heart before Nightcrawler did. My husband sends his thanks and regards to all at Marvel. Keep up the good work!

Josephine M. Conely  
Pedro Maldonado  
1519 Lovell Ave.  
Arcadia, CA 91007

Thanks for sharing that wonderful story with us, Josephine!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I would like to start by saying that I have been an ardent fan of EXCALIBUR since its inception some five years ago. I noticed something in issue #48 which compelled me to write. On page 2, panel 1, Feron has his hands in an interesting position. Now, I'm not sure if Mr. Davis was aware of this, but that particular gesture is of great importance in the philosophy of Taoism (an offshoot of Buddhism). It represents the cycle of life and death, and the rebirth of a new world through the destruction of the old. It is also interesting to note that the direction of this life (looking "Towards the Future," which includes a time of darkness) also conforms to the Taoistic belief of the world to come.

Of course, I may be reading too much into the philosophical undertones of the story, but I have always felt that the comic medium was an excellent source of entertainment and (heavens, no!) knowledge and vocabulary. I am extremely interested in seeing what the next few issues hold. I wonder, was Alan's father, J.J. Davis, to whom this issue is dedicated, the inspiration behind the storyline? Hmmmm... Thank you for taking the time to read this!

Ricky Chen  
113 W. Woodstone Ct.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

Thanks for pointing that out, Rocky!